United Nations E/2017/NGO/11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
2 June 2017
English
Original: French

2017 session
28 July 2016-27 July 2017
Agenda item 5
High-level segment

Statement submitted by Jeunesse horizon, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

17-09362 (E) 160617 160617

Please recycle

Statement

In its Human Development Report 1998, which referred to poverty in Cameroon, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) gave its view of poverty as a complex phenomenon generally characterized by a lack of the resources, choices and opportunities that make decent living conditions possible. For developing countries, and particularly for Cameroon, it remains a scourge on society. The eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions must be a priority for all stakeholders in society and the State.

The direct cause of poverty in Cameroon is unemployment, which is, in turn, a result of:

- An education system that emphasizes qualifications at the expense of professional skills and employment
- Bad governance, manifested in the waste of available human resources and of natural and mineral resources that are sold off cheaply
- A lack of structures to provide funding for projects, and hence a strong emphasis on the informal sector
- The rural exodus, whereby young people move from the villages to the cities in search of what they imagine will be a better situation, leaving usable lands behind.

The consequences of poverty are juvenile delinquency, drug use, prostitution, health problems, high illiteracy rates, dependence on others, and so on.

Sustainable development, which is defined as a new approach for the common good aimed at ensuring the durability of our societies, our ecosystem and our economy, is a unique opportunity to rethink the way we do things. Defined as such, sustainable development is a catalyst for innovation that must be economically efficient, socially equitable and environmentally sound.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals laid out by the United Nations in 2015 will be a real solution with regard to the reduction or eradication of poverty in Africa and in Cameroon if every stakeholder plays its role while respecting the following four basic principles:

- Solidarity among peoples, generations and members of society. Today we live in such a selfish world that it is important to cultivate solidarity with one another.
- The exercise of caution when taking decisions, so as not to cause harm to others when it is known that there are risks at all levels of implementation.
- The participation of all, regardless of social status, in order to ensure the success of projects undertaken.
- The responsibility of all — policymakers, businesspeople and farmers alike. Each individual must be responsible for his or her own actions and decisions.

At Jeunesse Horizon, we believe that this endeavour concerns everyone, and that everyone must reflect and take action for change. We therefore call on parents, teachers and State officials, regardless of their level of responsibility, and also associations, businesses, farmers and young people, to put respect for human value and improved well-being at the centre of their considerations.

17-09962